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# Cooking cured pork

## HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

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A755R A radio interview between Mrs. Rowena S. Carpenter and Miss Lucy M. Alexander, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through WRC and 44 other associate NBC stations, during the National Farm and Home Hour, October 29, 1931.

Mrs. Carpenter: How do you do, Homemakers!

I am sure that many of you have been using the leaflets on the cooking of lamb, pork, and beef, for many months, but you haven't heard what Miss Alexander and Mrs. Yeatman are doing with cured pork, -- not only with ham, smoked shoulder and bacon, but also with boneless shoulder butt, Canadian style bacon, and some of the other cured pork cuts that are rather new to many of us. And it is this recent work that Miss Alexander has come to the studio to tell us about today. What would you say, Miss Alexander, are the high spots in the cooking of cured pork?

Miss Alexander: Well, there is at least one secret of success in cooking cured pork (as well as fresh pork), and that is: Cook it slowly and thoroughly. Always use a moderate temperature whether the meat is fried, broiled, roasted, steamed, or cooked in water. Just take ham, for instance. That old standby "boiled" ham should not be boiled at all. It should be simmered, and really ought to be called "simmered" ham. But, regardless of how well its name describes it, ham cooked in water has the best texture if it cooks slowly below the boiling point. For baking, too, slow cooking is important. In our work we have found that low-temperature baking is superior to the cooking methods that use moisture. Before we bake a ham we usually soak it over night. The next day, we place the ham on a rack in an open roasting pan with the rind or fat side of the ham up, and add no water at all. We use a thermometer to tell the temperature of the oven, which should be about 250° to 260° F. Another thermometer kept in the center of the ham while it is cooking tells us when it is done. This is what Mrs. Carpenter described to you recently as a roast meat thermometer. Using such a thermometer is the very best way, whether for baking or boiling, to tell when the ham has cooked enough, and at the same time, to prevent over-cooking and excessive shrinkage. We cook it until the thermometer inside of the ham registers 170° F. By this slow method it takes from 25 to 30 minutes per pound for a whole ham to bake. Incidentally this is just the same time required for boiling a ham.

Mrs. Carpenter: Every time I think of baked ham I get a mental picture of that spicy, brown sugar coating that you always use, and it just makes my mouth water. It's such a good finish, whether for baked or boiled ham, that I think you should tell all of us about it.

Miss Alexander: The brown sugar coating does add lots to the appearance and flavor of ham and it's very easy to fix. After the ham is done just remove the outer skin, unless it happens to be one of the skinned kind, and prepare a paste of soft bread crumbs, brown sugar, and cider or vinegar, and spread this mixture evenly over the ham. Then stud it all over with whole cloves and put in a very hot oven for 10 minutes to brown the crust.

Mrs. Carpenter: I have no doubt that many of you would like to prepare such a festive looking ham for one of the coming holiday seasons, - for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Years, when you're likely to have a large family gathering to enjoy it - so I am sure you will want to send for the directions. What special suggestions have you for the small family, Miss Alexander?

Miss Alexander: Well, first, there are all of those things that can be done with a slice of ham. It can be cut thin, medium, or thick. And then it can be broiled, fried, or braised. But in whatever style you have it cut, when you cook it, do it fairly slowly. So many folks cook ham too fast and with so hot a fire that they just ruin it. In cooking sliced ham, we naturally think first of frying or broiling. Some of my friends are especially fond of the thinly sliced fried or broiled ham we often serve with fried or with deviled eggs. We have the butcher cut the ham just about a quarter of an inch thick, and allow about ten minutes for cooking it slowly and with frequent turning. It browns so beautifully and is so savory this way. Of course, there are times when we want a thicker slice, a half or three fourths of an inch piece. This should have about 20 minutes to cook.

Mrs. Carpenter: As you talked my mind kept turning to those thicker slices of ham and the things you do with them to make a dish that serves five people or so. Let's hear about those.

Miss Alexander: You mean, I believe, the thick ham slice baked with pineapple, or with sweetpotatoes, or scalloped with white potatoes. There isn't time to give those recipes but they're in the cured pork leaflet and in the new Aunt Sammy radio cookbook. A ham slice is good cooked with tomatoes, too, either raw or canned. But I must mention other small cuts such as the smoked boneless shoulder butt which may be bought under a variety of trade names. We simmer this in water about two hours, and if it is to be served cold, let it cool in the broth. Or, serve it hot with broiled canned peaches or with cider and raisin sauce turning this inexpensive cut into a very dressy dish.

Mrs. Carpenter: If you haven't tried a smoked boneless shoulder butt fixed the bureau's way, you've a treat in store for you. And the same is true, too, of that other shoulder roast pictured in the leaflet. Won't you describe it?

Miss Alexander: That's the smoked picnic shoulder, another inexpensive cut. It's especially good when boned and stuffed with spicy bread crumbs and raisins, and then baked in a moderate oven. We usually recommend having this cut boned a day ahead of cooking so that it can be soaked over night and then stuffed for roasting. Weighing only about 4 or 5 pounds, a smoked picnic shoulder makes a nice averagesized roast.

Mrs. Carpenter: So it does, but a cut even of that size is not likely to be used at one meal, so I wish you'd give us some of your good ideas for using left-overs.

Miss Alexander: Nothing can be better than dishes made from left-over cured pork. And it takes such a small quantity of this tasty meat to make such a good mixture. Even the ends and bits, when ground up and mixed with some mild-flavored sauce, vegetable, spaghetti, noodles, or rice, turn into an excellent luncheon or supper dish of croquettes, hash, creamed-on-toast, or scalloped combination.

Mrs. Carpenter: It is too bad with Miss Alexander so full of ideas not to have her tell you about sandwich fillings from left-over ham, about preparing Canadian style bacon, and using salt pork for savory vegetable dishes, for meat loaf, and for stuffings, but we'll just invite you, instead, to send for Leaflet 81, "Cooking Cured Pork", which is the latest of the series of meat

leaflets prepared by Mrs. Yeatman and Miss Alexander, in connection with the National Meat Project. Write to the Department of Agriculture in Washington or to your station for a copy of Cooking Cured Pork.

Goodbye, homemakers, until next Thursday!

